



NEWS RELEASE

June 14, 2016

London run celebrates women and supports mental health

London, Ont. - More than 400 runners and walkers of all ages, led by a 175-strong Team Shoppers Drug Mart, came out for the **SHOPPERS LOVE. YOU. Run for Women** in Harris Park this past Sunday (June 12). Organized in partnership with the Running Room and in support of Perinatal Mental Health Care at London Health Science's Centre's Women's Care Program, the event included a 1k "Little Steps" course as well as 5k and 10k run/walk courses.

Shoppers Drug Mart presented two cheques before the start of the Little Steps event. A \$25,000 cheque originating from online donations, shoe icon sales at Shoppers Drug Mart and \$10 per run participant. A second, \$7,050 cheque was presented by two front-store managers, Allison Nantais and Melissa Tiano, who organized a "Just for Kicks" soccer tournament and fundraiser two weeks prior to the run. The soccer event was attended by more than 200 Shoppers Drug Mart friends and family.

Dr. Heidi Haensel, Lead Psychiatrist at LHSC's Perinatal Mental Health Clinic was overjoyed with the event and the outstanding community support, thanking everyone involved on behalf of the hospital and its foundation.

Dr. Haensel explained how perinatal mental health issues can affect the lives of women, their partners and families, and can also affect the development and mental health of their babies. She also tackled some of the myths surrounding mental health and giving birth.

"Societal myths that pregnancy and post-partum are always filled with joy and happiness can contribute to the stigma women feel about experiencing mental health issues during this time," says Dr. Haensel. "The truth is; any woman is at risk of developing a mental health disorder in pregnancy and post-partum."

One in eight women will develop depression at some point in their lives making women twice as likely as men to experience a depressive episode. In developed countries, mental health disorders are the number one cause of death in women in the first year post-partum.

"For too long, mental health issues were often associated with a stigma and in some cases were not recognized as a true illness by society," says Fel dePadua, Associate/Owner of the Oxford & Hyde Park Shoppers Drug Mart store. "Fortunately, with renewed focus and events like this run, together we are making it acceptable to talk about the effects of mental illness and helping those who are suffering to find the support they need."

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The funds raised by *SHOPPERS LOVE. YOU. Run for Women* will help increase accessibility to mental health services at LHSC and in the community by building group programming, online resources, and improving the physical environment in the clinic's space.

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About Shoppers LOVE. YOU. *We've long been a proud champion of putting Women's Health first and our commitment has never been stronger. Shoppers LOVE. YOU. shares the expertise of our partners at leading women's health organizations, it offers new health resources, and it connects you with others in support of local Women's Health initiatives across Canada - all in an effort to help you stay focused on being your best. More information can be found at <http://www.shoppersloveyou.ca/>.*

For more about **Shoppers LOVE. YOU. Run For Women** in London please contact:

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London Health Sciences Foundation is a [Canada Revenue Agency](#) registered charity that is accredited by both [Imagine Canada](#) and the [Better Business Bureau](#). We link our community and health care experts - including physicians, allied professionals, researchers, staff and educators - together in pursuit of medical excellence at [London Health Sciences Centre](#) and [Lawson Health Research Institute](#). Established to strengthen LHSC's ability to provide the highest quality health care for patients in Southwestern Ontario and beyond, LHSF offers opportunities to enhance and advance health care by supporting discovery and innovation in research, education and patient care at our hospital. To see why donations are so important in supporting extraordinary care for patients, their families and friends at LHSC, visit www.lhsf.ca.

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